

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL POSS DUPE

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ACTION ARA-20

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 10684

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT

SUBJECT: PARTIAL POST-MORTEM ON VENEZUELAN
PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

1. I WAS PRESENT TODAY AS A MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE NORTH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF VENEZUELA, COMPOSED OF TOP EXECUTIVES OF U.S. ECONOMIC COMMUNITY IN THIS COUNTRY. THERE WAS A GENERAL FEELING OF SATISFACTION AT VICTORY OF ACCION DEMOCRATICA AND OF PLEASED AND RATHER PROUD SURPRISE THAT VENEZUELAN ELECTORATE HAD SHOWN SUCH MODERATION AND COMMON SENSE IN RETURNING A CANDIDATE WITH A MAJORITY OF HALF A MILLION VOTES. AMERICAN LEADERS FELT THAT THEY COULD "DO BUSINESS" WITH CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ AND HIS NEW CONGRESS WHICH THEY THOUGHT WOULD PROBABLY HAVE A SLIGHT AD MAJORITY, ALTHOUGH THIS HAD YET TO BE ESTABLISHED.

2. OUTGOING PRESIDENT OF NAA WALDRIP, WHO HAS LIVED ALMOST ALL HIS LIFE IN VENEZUELA AND HAS INTIMATE CONTACTS IN BOTH PARTIES, SAID THAT AT A POST-MORTEM SESSION OF COPEYANO LEADERSHIP, IT WAS AGREED THAT PARTY HAD MADE TWO IRRETRIEVABLE MISTAKES:

(A) CALDERA'S POLICY TOWARD CASTRO CUBA HAD RESULTED
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NOT ONLY IN VEHEMENT OPPOSITION BY NATURALIZED
VENEZUELAN OF CUBAN ORIGIN AND THE NUMEROUS

EXILE COLONY IN VENEZUELA BUT ALSO AN EVEN MORE
LETHAL RESPONSE AMONG WEALTHY CUBANS IN MIAMI WHO
PROMPTLY BEGAN TO POUR MONEY INTO ADECO COFFERS
TO DEFEAT COPEI.

(B) SECOND MISTAKE WAS TO PORTRAY LORENZO FERNANDEZ
AS A "FATHER FIGURE", USUALLY DANGLING ONE OF HIS INNUMERABLE
GRANDCHILDREN ON HIS KNEE. THIS CONTRASTED WITH THE
MORE RUGGED AND VIRILE IMAGE OF CARLOS ANDRES
PEREZ WHO EPITOMIZED HIS OWN SLOGAN "DEMOCRACIA
CON ENERGIA" AND HIS FREQUENT ASSERTIONS THAT
HE AS PRESIDENT WOULD BE IN OFFICE "A MANDAR Y NO A SER MANDADO."

3. COMMENT: IN OUR JUDGEMENT, EACH OF THESE ANALYSES IS
CORRECT ALTHOUGH EXTENT TO WHICH CUBAN EXILE MONEY MAY HAVE
TURNED THE TRICK IS NOT PUBLICLY KNOWN. WE WOULD ADD THAT A
THIRD FACTOR WHICH WORKED AGAINST COPEI WAS THE TOO BLATANT
AND TOO OBVIOUS BARNSTORMING OF CALDERA AND HIS MINSTER OF
PUBLIC WORKS OPENING NEW BRIDGES, HOSPITALS AND AIRPORTS ON
A THRICE A DAY BASIS, INCLUDING AS AN ULTIMATE TOUCH OF FATUITY
THE BREAKING OF NEW GROUND FOR A NON-EXISTENT SUBWAY
IN CARACAS. THEREFORE, IN OUR JUDGMENT, THE TRUE VICTOR OF THE
VENEZUELAN ELECTIONS WAS THE VENEZUELAN VOTER.
MCCLINTOCK

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